GWD GARMENT WORKER DIARIES

MFO

IMPACT OF DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES ON ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SAVINGS

Microfinance Opportunities

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Photo courtesy of a garment worker in Bangladesh

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Summary

Women in the RMG sector have the opportunity to gain access to and use new financial tools provided by the formal financial sector through digital wage payments. About half the women working in the RMG sector are currently being paid digitally, either into a bank or mobile money account. This gives the women the ability to take advantage of the benefits that formal financial services provide: low-cost access to a variety of tools (savings, transfers, loans, and insurance) in a secure setting, with limited opportunities for the arbitrary expropriation (or theft) of funds by some informal financial service provider operating under their own rules without accountability. The key findings in this report are:

- As a result of the Government of Bangladesh's lockdown in later March and early April 2020 and the general uncertainty created by the global pandemic, workers in the RMG sector reported very high levels of food insecurity in the second quarter of 2020.
- In the 5 months between the end of the Government of Bangladesh's initiative to promote wage digitization in July 2020 and the end of the year, the data suggest that:
  - Women who were paid digitally before the pandemic were more economically resilient (as measured by food security) than those who were paid in cash throughout 2020;
  - Women who began to receive their wages digitally in May 2020 due to the government initiative were no more economically resilient than women paid in cash throughout 2020.
- In 2021 the economic resilience of all workers increased to the point that only about 3% reported food security in any given month, suggesting that the impact of digital wages on economic resilience was in how it affected women's ability to bounce back from a crisis.
- Workers paid digitally in 2020 and 2021 were more likely to save money than their counterparts paid in cash. This was solely due to the fact that they left some money in their digital accounts, after withdrawing what they needed for their regular expenses.

Introduction

The vision statement for women's economic empowerment and financial inclusion (WEE-FI) of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is:

> By 2030, women have **near ubiquitous** (80% adults worldwide, 60% of those who earn <$2 a day), **equal access to DFS**, and can **easily, safely, and confidently use them** to manage their complex daily lives and aid in their aspirations, over which they have **agency and control**.

This report uses a unique data set that is the result of efforts by Microfinance Opportunities, in collaboration with South Asia Network of Economic Modeling (SANEM). This partnership has been implementing the Garment Worker Diaries (GWD) project at scale in Bangladesh since January 2019. During that time the project has collected data from 1,300 workers across about 500 factories every week from January 2019 to date, with a short hiatus in February and March, and a smaller sample in April 2020. Since May 2020 data collection has been conducted through one-on-one telephone interviews.

The weekly data collected cover what workers earn, borrow, save, transfer, any major expenditures, their food insecurity, and hours worked. In cases where a worker is asked about transactions in which money changes hands, we include questions about the method of payment (digital or cash) and, in the case of transfers, who was involved in the transaction. Periodically, the project collects additional data, which cover other topics or deepen our understanding of the behavior emerging out of the transactions data.

These data can be used to address several research questions directly related to the WEE-FI vision statement:

- Digital financial services (DFS):
    - What changes in behavior occur because of changes in how a worker is paid—from cash to digital payments, or digital to cash payments?
    - Is a worker who is or has been paid digitally more resilient?
    - Does a worker who is or has been paid digitally have greater financial well-being/health?
- Gender dynamics and women's economic empowerment:
    - Do digital wage payments to women workers change their control over their economic transactions: income, saving, borrowing, spending, and transfers?
    - Do they have greater financial well-being?

Furthermore, the project is in a unique position to address these questions in the context of a quasi-natural experiment that took place in Bangladesh from April to July 2020. Specifically, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, in late March the Government of Bangladesh ordered an economic lockdown to combat the spread of the virus. This included factory closings in the ready-made-garments (RMG) sector from late March to late April 2020. At the same time, the government of Bangladesh put in place a support program directed at workers in the RMG sector that provided loans at 2% interest to factories in the export sector to pay their workers' salaries for up to three months. The payment was arranged in collaboration with the employer, who provided a list of employees to the government for payment, but this was conditional on the worker being paid through a direct deposit into a mobile

money or bank account.[1] This resulted in a payment of about Tk. 6,000 to a garment worker who did not work in April and who normally earned the median salary of Tk. 10,000 per month.[2]

During the month of April about 2 million accounts were opened on behalf of workers so they could receive the first government support payment in May. This resulted in a massive shift in how workers received their pay—from about 28% of the GWD sample receiving their pay through direct deposit ("digitally") in April (for work performed in March) to about 76% receiving their pay digitally in May. This high level of digital payments continued in June and July, while the government program lasted but many factories reverted to cash payments beginning in August. By December about 56% of workers in the GWD sample were being paid digitally.

There have been very few studies of the impact of digital wage payments on the economic well-being of workers who have undergone the transition from cash to digital payments. We are only aware of one study that attempts to study the effects using a control group (see Breza, Kanz and Klapper, 2020). The assumption is that digital payments are bound to be beneficial to workers but this has not been clearly established.

Research design

Intervention and theory of change

The quasi-natural experiment includes a two-fold intervention. First, the sudden shift to digital payments affecting about 650 workers in our sample initiated by factories seeking to take advantage of the government program. Second, the shift back to cash payments affecting about 300 workers in our sample after some of the factories decided not to pay workers digitally. Given the government's intervention design, it is not surprising that workers who were shifted from cash to digital payments were more likely to be better paid before the intervention than those who continued to be paid in cash and have greater food security (a critical measure of economic resilience in this study) during the crisis period immediately after the lockdown from May to July 2020. The data also suggest that workers employed by factories that drifted back to cash payments from August to December had lower monthly salaries than those workers who continued to receive digital payments through to the end of 2021, but the food insecurity of the workers in these two groups were roughly the same during the May to July 2020 period.

In light of these data, it is not possible to claim that workers were assigned to the treatment group randomly in either step of the intervention, hence this is a *quasi*-natural experiment. Nevertheless, the close similarity of the treatment and comparison groups and the large amount of panel data collected both in the year before the intervention and during and after the intervention will allow for the use of statistical techniques to control for other factors that correlate with the assignment of workers into the treatment and comparison groups.

[1] *https://www.thedailystar.net/business/news/guideline-disbursement-tk-5000cr-stimulus-package-unveiled-1888453*

[2] *https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/rmg/no-layoff-rmg-factories-workers-duty-get-full-salaries-75214*

Hypotheses:

1 **Exposure to digital wage payments.** Digital wage payments provide workers with access to and require the use of a digital financial service—at minimum the withdrawal of cash from the digital account each month. This exposure to a digital financial service will change the worker's economic behavior in the following ways:

1.1 Increase the amount saved in a digital account.

1.1.1 Workers may have previously had a digital account but not received wages into it. Those workers may now save more in their account because the initial deposit into the account is performed by another party (the employer) rather than by the worker themselves thus triggering a "default" savings mechanism, whereby the worker leaves some money in their account each month after cashing out what is needed to cover expenses.

1.2 Increase the amount saved.

1.2.1 The GWD data suggest that workers commonly set aside money at home in cash. A regular digital wage payment into an account that offers workers the opportunity to save in a place that is not immediately accessible, either by the worker or by other members of their household. Lack of immediate accessibility of savings can lead to increased savings by making it harder for workers to dip into their savings frivolously.

1.3 Increase the number of transfers sent to people outside the immediate household.

1.3.1 Wage payments into a digital account mean that the worker has money in a digital format that makes it easier to transfer to another person, eliminating the step that would be otherwise needed of "cashing in" at an agent and then sending the money.

1.4 Increase the number of transfers received from people outside the immediate household.

1.4.1 A worker who has an account she regularly uses is more likely to be able to receive a digital transfer than one who does not have a digital account or has one that they do not use to receive wage payments.

2 **Learning by doing.** The longer a worker receives a digital wage payment the more she learns about how to use it for her own benefit. In most cases the effects on behavior, as described under hypothesis 1, will be linear (although likely to run up against a resource constraint—a low-income person can only save so much), but in some cases the behavioral trajectory might be U-shaped.

2.1 Savings will increase over time as workers become comfortable with their digital account.

2.2 Transfers to people outside the household may increase and then decrease over time as workers come to realize that "frictionless" transfers can quickly drain their accounts and they need to manage their account, and the demands made on it, more effectively.

3 **Increased resilience.** Based on the changes in behavior described in 1 and 2 we might expect workers to show increased resilience in the face of a crisis and its aftermath. Resilience in the face of a crisis has three components:

3.1 Crisis avoidance—in the absence of a working insurance system and government systems to protect people, we do not expect digital wage payments to have an impact on crisis avoidance

3.2 Crisis impact mitigation—if digital wage payments have an impact on savings and transfer behavior we can expect them to decrease the impact of a crisis on worker well-being because the worker will have more resources to use to cope with the crisis

3.3 Crisis recovery—if digital wage payments have an impact on savings and transfer behavior we can expect a worker to recover from a crisis more quickly because the worker will have more resources to use to recover

4 **Women's economic empowerment.** A digital wage payment can benefit women in the ways described above, but there are specific gender dynamics within a household that have the potential to mediate the effects described in hypotheses 1 and 2, either positively or negatively. Specifically:

4.1 A wage payment into a digital account increases the control a woman has over her income because she controls how much cash she brings home and makes accessible to other members of the household.

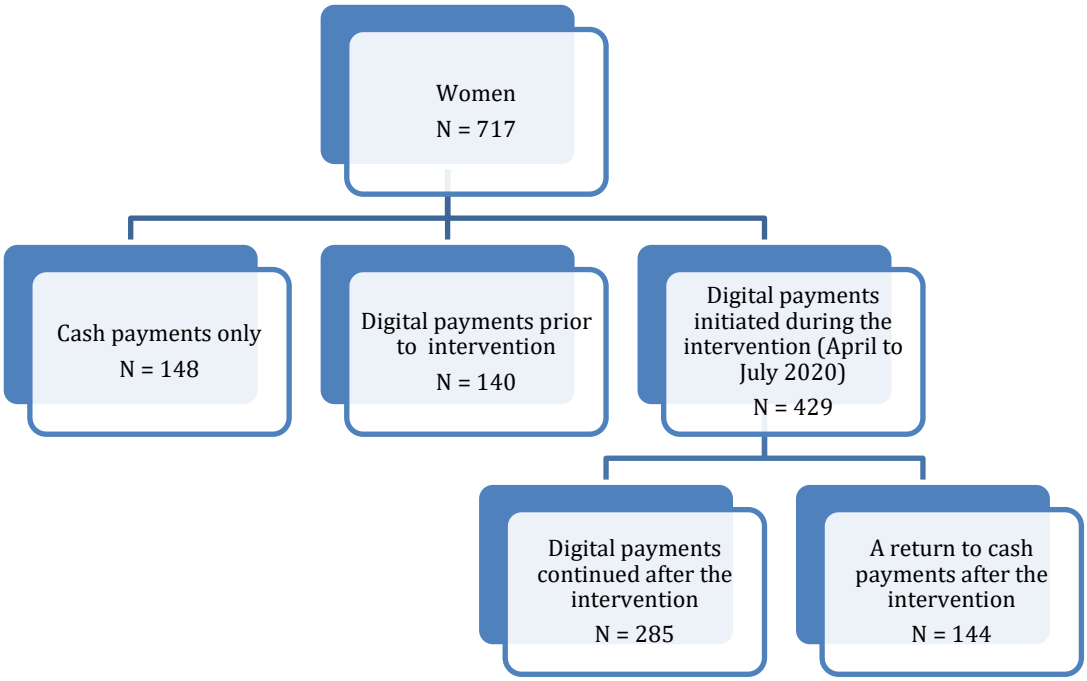
4.2 A wage payment into a digital account decreases the control a woman has over her income if another person in her household has access to or control over the phone or card by which she accesses her account. In such a case, the other person may:

4.2.1 Find out, through a balance check, how much money a woman has in her account and demand some of it—if the woman was paid in cash she could hide some of the cash from the other person and they would be none the wiser; and/or

4.2.2 Access the account directly and keep the money for their own use—if the woman was paid in cash she could hide some of the cash from the other person

Study design

We test these hypotheses by using the weekly behavior data of women garment workers participating in the GWD project before, during, and after the intervention. The unit of analysis is each individual woman in the sample. Given the nature of the intervention workers are not assigned into treatment and control groups, but rather treatment and comparison groups based on whether their employer participated or not in the government support scheme. There is also no random assignment of workers whose employer participated in the government scheme and then reverted to cash payments. As a result, the final distribution of women workers across treatment and comparison groups at the different stages of the study is determined by the actions of employers, not the research team, and can only be determined after the fact. Based on reported wage payment data from the GWD study the following is a breakdown of the sample across the different groups:



We then analyze the behavior of women workers in the different groups focusing on the following indicators, which are collected weekly through telephone interviews:

Economic behavior

1. Amount of deposits/withdrawals into/out of home savings—money set aside by the worker in cash that they keep at home
2. Amount of deposits/withdrawals into/out of a savings account outside the home
3. Count and amount of transfers to/from people outside the immediate household of the worker

Resilience

4. Count of responses to food security questions where workers respond whether they have experienced food insecurity in a given week.

Women's economic empowerment

5. Count and amount of transfers to/from people within the immediate household of the worker

Time frames

We evaluate the impact of the intervention implemented by the Government of Bangladesh in 2020 using data from May 2020 until December 2021. Given that many workers reverted to cash in the period from August to December 2020, we look at the indicators above to determine the extent to which the different groups in the study have different outcomes in short- and medium-term. For the short-term evaluation we look at worker behavior from August to December 2020. For the intermediate-term evaluation we look at worker behavior from January to December 2021. To account for possible distortions related to the Ramada, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha period when workers receive annual bonuses and cash advances that might affect their savings and transfer behavior we also look at the impact of DFS on behavior during the period from August to December 2021 only.

Sample and Sample Selection

The scaled Garment Worker Diaries (GWD) project began in July 2018 with a scale up period that lasted until December 2018. Since January 2019 the project has been collecting data from about 1,300 workers every week, except in February and March 2020 when, for funding reasons, the project halted briefly, and April 2020, when only 800 workers were interviewed.

The field team was able to reconnect with most of the same workers who had participated in the study up to January 2020, so the distribution of the sample is based on the sampling conducted in 2018. At that time there were no up-to-date, publicly available sources of data on the distribution of garment workers in Bangladesh—the Labour Force Survey (LFS) was implemented in 2017 but the data were not available at that time. As a workaround MFO used the geographic location of garment factories (not workers), as recorded in lists from the BGMEA, Accord, Alliance, and the Government of Bangladesh's Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments in 2018. The project identified five industrial areas with a high concentration of garment factories. These were Chittagong, Dhaka, Gazipur, Savar and Narayanganj. Within these, sub-areas (agglomerations of thanas/upazilas of varying sizes) were selected to cover between 70% and 80% of the factories in each area, starting with the largest sub-areas. In each sub-area, the team identified housing blocks where workers in the RMG sector live through a mix of random walks (starting at different locations) and opportunistic sampling. When the field researchers identified a housing block where garment workers lived, they attempted to recruit ten workers from that block. Where this was not possible, they recruited workers from nearby housing blocks. Finally, the sampling procedure deliberately over-sampled women to ensure that their economic status could be analyzed in detail.

The table below shows a comparison between the MFO sample and LFS data—note that Savar and Dhaka City, which are two different areas in our sample, are combined because they are both in Dhaka District. The first column of numbers shows the distribution of garment workers in Bangladesh across the four districts MFO targeted, based on the now-available LFS data. The second column shows the distribution of workers, based on the LFS, across just the four districts MFO targeted. The third column shows the share of GWD participants by district. The fourth column shows the study sample, which consists of all workers participating in the GWD for whom we have data from all four years of the scaled up project: 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. The fifth column shows the distribution of women in the study sample.

Based on the LFS data, we can say that the districts MFO targeted for the GWD are home to about 70% of all garment workers in Bangladesh. Furthermore, the LFS data show that no other district in Bangladesh is home to more than 3% of all garment workers. We can also say that though the GWD is overly concentrated in the target districts, the distribution of the sample across those districts is representative, with some minor differences, of the distribution of workers across those districts as found in the LFS (column 2). Furthermore, the study sample, including the sub-sample of women, has a distribution that matches the LFS, with some minor differences.

Table 1: GWD Distribution vs LFS Distribution

District of residence	Distribution of LFS workers in Bangladesh	Distribution of LFS workers in 4 target districts	GWD Sample Distribution	Study Sample Distribution	Study Sample Distribution (Women)
Chittagong	11%	16%	14%	13%	14%
Dhaka	33%	48%	42%	43%	42%
Gazipur	15%	22%	28%	28%	29%
Narayanganj	10%	14%	15%	16%	15%
Total for 4 Districts	69%	100%	99%	100%	100%

Model

Model structure

To determine the relationship between the outcome variables (food security and savings) and factors that might be correlated with those variables, we include unvarying, observed characteristics of workers, such as age at the time of enrollment in the study and gender, and behavioral variables, such as income and transfers, that vary from month to month. In addition, we take into account the observed, general increase in food security (our measure of resilience) over time starting in May 2020, when we first collected food security data. We did this by including in our model a numeric variable for each month based on the number of months that had passed, with May 2020 being month 1. We did this when modeling worker resilience but not savings behavior, because there was no indication in the data that there was a trend in savings. Instead, we included month dummy variables in the savings model to control for the particularities of the months around Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

To further understand how the model works during different time periods we applied it to data in different time periods. In the case of food security, we looked at two periods: from August to December 2020; and from January 2021 to December 2021. In the case of savings, we looked at three periods: August to December 2020; April to August 2021 to account for the period around the two Eids; and August to December 2021.

Dependent variables

Since May 2020 we have been asking workers the following question every week:

> *During the past week, have you eaten less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?*

We have aggregated those data by month and coded a month as food insecure if a worker responded "yes" to this question in at least half the weeks during the month, giving us a binary dependent variable.

In the case of savings, a descriptive analysis of the data strongly suggest that saving at home is a very different activity from saving in a bank or mobile money account (digital account). Saving at home is

an activity all workers engage in, while only some workers use a digital account to save. Furthermore, workers regularly deposit money into their home savings for later use. They rarely actively deposit money into a digital account. Rather, a third party, invariably their employer, deposits money into their account through a direct deposit and then the worker withdraws it. For the purposes of the analysis that follows we calculate the net flow into/out of an account and home savings each month and apply the model to each variable.

Independent Variables

The following are the variables used in the model with an explanation of why they were included:

Table 2: Variables in Analytical Model

Variable	Type of variable	Rationale
Intervention status: Paid cash May to July 2020 Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 and subsequent months Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 but then reverted to cash Paid digitally prior to the pandemic	Time invariant	Variable of interest in this report: did workers who started receiving digital wage payments during the pandemic fare better than those that did not? Did workers who subsequently stopped receiving digital wages fare worse?
Wage payment method (digital or cash)	Varies over time	How a person gets paid can determine how they manage their money.
Household size	Time invariant	Affects how much spare money a worker may have to save or spend on food
Education	Time invariant	Data from many studies of money management suggest that general education is correlated with money management capabilities, which can affect how much a person saves or has available to spend on food
Years in garment work sector	Time invariant	It is possible that the longer a person has been employed in the sector the more experience they have managing their money in the

Variable	Type of variable	Rationale
		context of the monthly payment cycle, and the Eid bonuses
Marital status	Time invariant	A woman's marital status can affect her role within the household and her economic activity
Region	Time invariant	Different regions may have different cultural norms regarding spending and saving and/or different wage levels and costs of living
Age	Time invariant (for the purposes of analysis, we use age at time of enrollment into study)	Workers of different ages may have different experiences managing money that might affect their willingness and ability to save and their spending habits
Month	Varies over time	During the project period there was a general increase in food security. This variable takes that general increase into account. There was no general trend in net savings across the months, but we know that the months around Eid involve a variety of special transactions: annual bonus payments, money transfers to family, and visits to family. These may have an impact on savings behavior, and need to be accounted for.
Transfers out of the household	Varies over time	Transfers affect how much money is available to workers to save and pay for expenses such as food.
Transfers from outside of the household	Varies over time	Transfers affect how much money is available to workers to save and pay for expenses such as food.
Transfers to another within the household	Varies over time	Transfers affect how much money is available to workers to save and pay for expenses such as food.
Transfers from another within the household	Varies over time	Transfers affect how much money is available to workers to save and pay for expenses such as food.
Worker received a loan	Varies over time	Loans affect worker liquidity, including how much they take out of the savings account

Variable	Type of variable	Rationale
		and how much they have available to purchase food.
Worker repaid a loan	Varies over time	Loan repayments affect worker liquidity, including how much they take out of the savings account and how much they have available to purchase food.
Factory Income	Varies over time	Factory income determines how much money workers have to save and spend.

Results

Food security

The results of the analysis suggest that in the period right after the initial impact of the Covid pandemic—from August to December 2020, there was a correlation between access to digital financial services (DFS) through digital wage payments and food security (our indicator of resilience) Specifically, workers who had been paid digitally before the start of the Covid pandemic were **more** food secure than those who either began to be paid digitally during the pandemic or were paid in cash the whole time. Furthermore, we also found those that were paid digitally, even after controlling for income, were more food secure than those paid in cash. There was also a correlation between a variety of worker characteristics and resilience. But we did not see a correlation between various types of economic behavior and food security.

When we run the same analysis for the later period, from January to December 2021, we find that worker characteristics were correlated with food security in roughly the same way as in the earlier period. But the DFS correlations disappear, which is likely a reflection of the fact that food security was generally high during 2021. One interpretation of these results is that access to and experience using DFS in the form of digital wage accounts enabled women garment workers to bounce back more quickly from the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic. Once workers' situations returned to normal, DFS had less of a role to play.

Table 3: Food security results

Variable	Correlation with food security	
	August to December 2020	**January to December 2021**
Intervention status: Paid cash May to July 2020 Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to	Workers who had been paid digitally before the start of the Covid pandemic were **more** food secure than those who either began to be paid digitally during the pandemic	No correlation

Variable	Correlation with food security	
	August to December 2020	**January to December 2021**
July 2020 and subsequent months Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 but then reverted to cash Paid digitally prior to the pandemic	or were paid in cash the whole time	
Wage payment method (digital or cash)	No correlation	No correlation
Household size	No correlation	No correlation
Education	Weak correlation (94% confidence)	Workers with a secondary level of education and above were **more** food secure than those with no education.
Years in garment work sector	No correlation	No correlation
Marital Status	Widowed women had much **less** food security during this time, than married women.	Single women were **more** food secure than married women.
Age	No correlation	Older workers were **more** food secure during this period
Region	Workers in Dhaka and Savar were **more** food secure than workers in the other regions.	Workers in Dhaka and surrounding areas were **more** food secure than workers in Chittagong
Month	Food security improved during this period from 23% of workers reporting being food secure during at least half of the weeks in that month to 84% reporting the same in December 2020.	Food security improved during this period from 84% of workers reporting being food secure during at least half of the weeks in that month to 97% reporting the same in December 2020
Transfers out of the household	No correlation. This may be because for some workers, transfers increased food insecurity but other workers	No correlation

Variable	Correlation with food security	
	August to December 2020	**January to December 2021**
	only made transfers if they were food secure	
Transfers from outside of the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers to another within the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers from another within the household	No correlation	No correlation
Worker received a loan	No correlation	No correlation
Worker repaid a loan	No correlation	No correlation
Factory Income	No correlation	The more a worker earned the **more** food secure she was

Savings

The results of the analysis of savings, using the same model, tell a different story. There is very little correlation between worker characteristics and either home savings or savings in a digital account—there seems to be nothing inherent in being of a particular age or marital status and savings behavior. When we include gender in the model and apply it to the sample of both men and women, there is also no difference in their propensity to save.

As might be expected, a worker tended to save more the more she earned, both at home and in her digital account. We saw this effect during the second have of 2020 and during the Eid months of 2021, but in the period from August to December 2021 the correlation disappeared. The most consistent predictor of saving in a digital account was being paid in a digital account, which speaks to the fact that the way workers save is simply to leave money in their account—we saw very few deposits by a worker into their digital account. During the Eid months in 2021 we did observe that workers making transfers to others in their household or outside their household saved less in their digital account. But this correlation was limited to that period, which happens to be when workers make more transfers to family around the Eid celebrations. But the negative correlation between transfers and savings disappeared after the Eid months.

Finally, it should be noted that very few variables were correlated with home savings. This may be due to the fact that workers use home savings as a way to manage their week-to-week cash flow needs, which balance out across a month, which is the unit of time in these models. There was one interesting correlation that emerged out of the analysis of the August to December 2020 period: workers who were paid digitally before the pandemic saved more at home during that period. They also saved in their digital account, because they were paid digitally, but in this regard they were no different from other workers who were paid digitally. It is unclear why they saved more at home, but it is also consistent with the finding related to food security and resilience. It may be the case that workers

who had experience being paid digitally were better able to manage their money during the crisis that began with the lockdown in March 2020, but was largely over by the end of 2020.

Table 4: Savings from August to December 2020

Variable	Home Savings	Digital Account
Intervention status: Paid cash May to July 2020 Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 and subsequent months Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 but then reverted to cash Paid digitally prior to the pandemic	During this period workers who had been paid digitally before the start of the Covid pandemic saved **more** at home than those paid in cash throughout.	During this period workers who started to be paid digitally during the Covid pandemic saved **less** in a digital account than those paid in cash throughout. But this because there are a few instances when a worker paid in cash from May through July was subsequently paid digitally and that had a marked increasing in the digital account savings.
Wage payment method (digital or cash)	Workers who were paid digitally saved **less** at home than those paid in cash	Workers who were paid digitally saved **far more** in a digital account than those paid in cash
Household size	No correlation	No correlation
Education	No correlation	No correlation
Years in garment work sector	No correlation	No correlation
Marital status	No correlation	No correlation
Region	Workers in Dhaka, Gazipur, and Savar saved **less** at home than workers in Chittagong and Narayanganj	Workers in Narayanganj saved **more** in a digital account than workers in Chittagong
Age	No correlation	No correlation
Month	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers out of the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers from outside of the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers to another within the household	No correlation	No correlation

Variable	Home Savings	Digital Account
Transfers from another within the household	No correlation	No correlation
Worker received a loan	No correlation	No correlation
Worker repaid a loan	Workers who repaid a loan during a month saved **less** at home	No correlation
Factory Income	The more a worker earned in a month the **more** they saved at home	The more a worker earned in a month the **more** they saved in a digital account

Table 5: Savings During Eid Months 2021

	Home Savings	Digital Account
Intervention status: Paid cash May to July 2020 Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 and subsequent months Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 but then reverted to cash Paid digitally prior to the pandemic	No correlation	No correlation
Wage payment method (digital or cash)	No correlation	Those paid digitally saved **far more** in a digital account
Household size	No correlation	No correlation
Education	No correlation	No correlation
Years in garment work sector	No correlation	No correlation
Marital Status	No correlation	No correlation

	Home Savings	Digital Account
Region	Workers in Dhaka and Savar saved **less** than workers in Chittagong and Narayanganj	Workers in Dhaka and Narayanganj saved **more** in a digital account than workers in Chittagong
Age	No correlation	No correlation
Month	Workers saved **less** at home in May 2021 than they did in April 2021	Workers saved **more** in a digital account in July and August 2021 than they did in April 2021
Transfers out of the household	No correlation	The more workers transferred out of the household the **less** they saved in a digital account
Transfers from outside of the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers to another within the household	No correlation	The more workers transferred to another person in the household the **less** they saved in a digital account
Transfers from another within the household	No correlation	No correlation
Worker received a loan	No correlation	No correlation
Worker repaid a loan	No correlation	The more a worker repaid a loan the **less** saved in a digital account
Factory Income	The more a worker earned in a month the **more** they saved at home	The more a worker earned in a month the **more** they saved in a digital account

Table 6: Savings from August to December 2021

Variable	Home Savings	Digital Account
Intervention status: Paid cash May to July 2020 Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 and subsequent months	No correlation	No correlation

Variable	Home Savings	Digital Account
Paid cash prior to the pandemic and then paid digitally May to July 2020 but then reverted to cash Paid digitally prior to the pandemic		
Wage payment method (digital or cash)	No correlation	Those paid digitally saved **far more** in a digital account
Household size	No correlation	No correlation
Education	No correlation	No correlation
Years in garment work sector	No correlation	No correlation
Marital Status	No correlation	No correlation
Region	No correlation	Workers in Dhaka, Gazipur, and Savar saved **more** in a digital account than workers in Chittagong
Age	No correlation	No correlation
Month	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers out of the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers from outside of the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers to another within the household	No correlation	No correlation
Transfers from another within the household	No correlation	No correlation
Worker received a loan	No correlation	No correlation
Worker repaid a loan	No correlation	The more a worker repaid a loan saved **less** in a digital account
Factory Income	No correlation	No correlation